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MINERAL KING PRESERVATION SOCIETY
MKPS
2936 SOUTH WEST STREET
VISALIA, CA. 93277

August 2, 1993

Dear Mrs. Peterson:

Jean Koch, in her second letter to me, responded to my inquiries concerning the MKPS. I am herewith sending my membership check in along with a couple of memorial checks for departed MKPS departed kindred spirits.

The formation of MKPS truly warms my heart after our discovery of the MK area back in 1960 when we moved to California. MK quickly became my personal Shangrila for regular, almost weekly, revitalizations from the tumults of aerospace engineering with the many top priority projects through putting men on the moon and other space explorations. My family relished the place and particularly my budding artist son in his most formative years. Enclosed is a copy of his pen and ink sketch of our beloved White Chief from the meadows just below this glorious bowl.

"Cork"

My first memorial is to Grace Alles, that most wonderful almost centurian who became a part of most families passing her tiny cabin immediately above the Atell Mill ranger's house across the road. You, like our family, most likely signed her "register board" each year on your first trip up the road. To the old timers and the first timers winning her friendship, you undoubtedly where invited to sit down-a-piece to get brought up to date from first snowfall. Did you partake of the wonderful tales and games of Chinese Checkers interspersed with some home baked cookies or popcorn she always seemed to quickly make as she encouraged you to prolong your visit? Did she get teary eyed with you when talking about the torquoise underground lake which she so wanted to see "just one more time"? Did you talk with her about her father who homesteaded Atwell before her birth? Did she recount her husband who ran the sawmill at Atwell? Did your family members traipse down into her meadow to perhaps apply some preservative oil compound to the remnants of the old steam engine which powered the mill? How dearly is would give my right arm for a copy of the PBS video in which she was interviewed during our battle to save MK from the predations of the Disney Corporation. Perhaps a copy of this video would put many nights dreams to peace for me in these late Autumn years.

The second memorial is to my former wife, Virginia Ann Peters, who grew to love the MK area and put up with my son and I making regular all day expeditions while she stayed at our Atwell MIll Campground camp, relaxed in a high meadow or fished in a meandering stream. I recall so clearly one bright , sunny, late summer afternoon on the way up to Mosquito Lake when she had a backpack on her which looked like a good piece of a grand piano. My son and I, also with large packs had gone on ahead to a trail rise and got to chatting with some other hikers coming down the trail. One of the exhausted fellows looked down and spotted my wife coming up - "Holy smokes, look at that woman carrying that tremendous load!" Whenever we went into the back country I always took extra supplies - just in case! Ginny loved MK and spoke or wrote of it many times before her passing last January. To the last she often talked about "one more trip to MK, just one more campfire with friends, just one more sitting at the front of the old MK general store--------." Ginny and I where among the first to feel a peculiar undercurrent at MK which jelled

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into attemping to draw the Sierra Club and other conservation organizations into protecting this fragile area from overdevelopment. We were pleased to finally have them come in about five years later with their power to help us win the battle. It was during those years of battle that we became friendly with the Kochs and many others with similar interests.

The cabin crowd became friends and kept encouraging us to buy a cabin to become a more permanent part of the MK settlements. During those years, we preferred tenting, back packing and then small camper vehicles to permit greater mobility and less worry through the off season while trapped in the Los Angeles Basin area with a job and home there. I was happy to receive a letter from a "follower" who's family bought in the Silver City cabin area and the widowed Heidi wrote of Fred's evening Alpenstock horn playing which resounded up and down the valleys. Fred and other European friends all raved about those high alpine meadows and peaks.

Memories begin to get a little vague about the highlight MK TASK FORCE campout at the Silver City store and campground when the group spent a wonderful three days meeting, planning and listening to well known conservationists and naturalists. I can still savor the delicious barbaqued steak and hear the voices around the campfire.

I could go on and on with many days of outstanding memories of my personal Shangrila and its meanings to, family, friends and me. Perhaps, now that I am in retirement, pages of memories may yet spill out from my PC laptop computer/wordprocessor to be placed into book of memoirs which my daughter Nancy (Peters) Winter and son George Allen Peters keep prodding me to continue. If I had my "druthers", I would be up there at MK besides the rushing stream with my PC laptop and flyrod line floating downstream

Most Sincerely,

George Peters

George Alvin Peters "SR"
Atwell Mill/MK assistant, assistant, assistant ranger trained by Chief Chief Ranger Grace Alles

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"Corky" Peters

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